

Comcast Internet Security Update: Constant Guard™ Bot Detection and Notification Program Rolling Out Nationally

Comcast is furthering its efforts to help fight the growing proliferation of bots, which the National Cyber Security Alliance has called “one of the Internet’s fastest growing cyber crimes.”

Launched last year as a trial in Denver, Comcast has been continuously testing and refining its Constant Guard™ Bot Detection and Notification service, which will now be introduced across the country on a market-by-market basis. The effort combines best-in-class bot detection technologies with a scalable notification system that points customers to resources they can access to remove a bot and prevent it from infecting other computers. This initiative, as well as the other components of the ‘Constant Guard’ Security Program, is provided to Comcast’s Internet customers for no additional charge.

What is a bot?

A bot is a type of virus that allows an attacker to force a computer to perform actions, usually without the owner's or user's knowledge. Once a bot is in control of a computer, it can be used to send spam, host phishing sites or infect other computers.

Constant Guard is the culmination of a multi-year effort and comprises:

- **Customer Security Assurance:** We have hired and trained a highly skilled team of security professionals who proactively contact customers to respond to issues relating to spam, and virus infected computers, as well as other security-related issues.
- **Education:** Our robust online security website includes real-time security alerts, tips, tools and other resources that can help educate and protect consumers. It is available at: www.comcast.net/security
- **World-Class Technology:**
 - **Top-rated Norton Security Suite:** Comcast provides Norton's award-winning online security software to help guard against identity theft, viruses, hackers, spam, phishing and more. It also includes easy-to-use parental controls to help keep kids safe online. (Norton is a \$160 value included for no additional charge.)
 - **Secure Backup & Share:** The new easier way to securely backup and share valuable files like digital photos and financial or medical records. (The service includes 2 GB of storage for no additional charge.)
 - **Desktop Applications:** The Comcast Toolbar includes anti-spyware, network-embedded anti-spam and anti-virus technologies brought to you through our partnerships with Bizanga, Cloudmark®, Goodmail CertifiedEmail™ and Return Path. In addition, Comcast uses up-to-date blocklists from Spamhaus and TrendMicro to help reduce and guard against unwanted spam.
 - **Proactive Bot Notification:** As a new feature of the Constant Guard service, we may email a “Service Notice” to a Comcast customer’s email address if we believe a computer behind their cable modem may be infected with a type of virus called a Bot. A Bot is a malicious form of software that could use a computer to send spam, host a phishing site, or steal an individual’s identity by monitoring individual keystrokes. The email will advise customers to go to the Comcast Constant Guard Center at <http://constantguard.comcast.net>, where they can access resources to help them remove the Bot from their computer.

More information is available at: <http://security.comcast.net/constantguard>

According to Javelin Strategy and Research, there were more than 11.2 million victims of identity theft fraud in the U.S. last year at an estimated total cost of \$54 billion. Many of those thefts were made possible through the use of bots (or viruses).

What people are saying:

"I encourage proactive efforts by Internet Service Providers to help educate and protect consumers from Internet crimes like malicious bots. It is important for business and government to work together to keep Internet users safe." - **National Association of Attorneys General President and North Carolina Attorney General Roy Cooper (D)**

"Cyber criminals cost our state tens of millions of dollars every year both in financial theft from our citizens as well as the cost of funding law enforcement resources to fight them. Bots are a real and emerging threat to American consumers and this is a welcome initiative for customers in our state and across the country." - **Rob McKenna (R), Attorney General for Washington State and President-Elect of NAAG**

"The new Comcast safeguards are in line with industry best practices to help ISPs assist customers whose machines have been infected with malware. By deploying the technology to detect bots on their subscribers' computers, Comcast is providing a service to their customers and contributing to safer messaging." - **Jerry Upton, Executive Director of MAAWG (Messaging Anti-Abuse Working Group)**

"Philadelphia-based Comcast, which has [16.5] million non-commercial customers, began [Constant Guard] last fall. Such initiatives, some experts said, could start to clear out the "noise" in the networks and could help in identifying higher-order threats that could compromise critical computer systems." - **Ellen Nakashima, Washington Post**

"The program, which Comcast hopes to roll out nationally, is one of the most aggressive moves yet by a major Internet provider to curb what's become a scourge on the Internet." - **Deb Yao, Associated Press**

"This appears to be the first service where an ISP proactively notifies customers about security issues on their computers. For years, security experts have complained that ISPs are uniquely positioned to and should do more to help customers combat security problems. But ISPs have been reluctant to assume additional responsibilities that are not central to their core service offering and for which they would then have to maintain a standard going forward." - **Elinor Mills, CNET**

"Comcast is one of the first major ISPs to take a proactive approach to helping customers deal with viruses and malware and customers have reportedly responded positively—after all, most Internet users need all the help they can get in this area." - **Jacqui Cheng, Ars Technica**

"This is a smart effort from Comcast, and it would be good to see other ISPs follow suit." - **Sebastian Rupley, GigaOM**